

PLANNING & REDEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MARCH 12, 2009

Prepared by: Elisa Reynolds, Associate Planner

ITEM V-B: CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT - 5871 SILKWOOD WAY - SERSP PCL 83 - METRO PCS CELL TOWER EXTENSION - FILE #2009PL-009 (PROJECT # CUP-000055)

REQUEST

The applicant requests approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a six foot height extension of an existing 146 foot PG&E tower and the addition of six new cellular antennas. A Conditional Use Permit is required for increasing the height of towers that exceed sixty feet in height.

Applicant – Deanne Coble, Metro PCS Property Owner – City of Roseville

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Redevelopment Department recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the three findings of fact for the Conditional Use Permit; and
- B. Approve the Conditional Use Permit with eight (8) conditions of approval.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES

There are no outstanding issues associated with this request. The applicant has reviewed and is in agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

BACKGROUND

The project site is located at 5871 Silkwood Way in the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan area. The site is an existing 146 foot tall PG&E tower located on a city-owned Open Space parcel within an existing power line corridor. The parcel is roughly bounded by Silkwood Way on the northwest, Old Auburn Road on the southeast, and single-family dwellings on the northeast and southwest. (See Figure 1, page 2)

The applicant proposes to co-locate six (6) antennas on the most easterly tower (see Figure 1, below). The PG&E lattice tower itself is 140 feet tall. There is an existing six-foot tall extension ("top hat") on the tower that was placed by a cellular provider when a previous co-location was attached to the tower. The previous tenant removed their cellular antennas and associated equipment in October 2008.

The current request is to increase the height of the existing PG&E high voltage transmission tower from 146 feet to approximately 152 feet. The applicant proposes to remove the existing 6-foot extension and replace it with a 12-foot extension. The 12-foot extension, inclusive of the six (6) antennas, will be necessary to provide adequate separation between the power lines and the proposed panel antennas. The antennas will be mounted at the top of the extension, approximately 150-feet above grade. The electronic equipment will be located below, within the footprint of the tower and concealed behind a new six-foot tall wooden fence.



Figure 1: Zoning and Land Use

FINDINGS & EVALUATION

The Zoning Ordinance encourages the co-location of antennas on existing towers wherever feasible; because facility and site sharing minimizes impacts to the surrounding properties and facilitates the improvements needed to enhance telecommunications service capacity.

Section 19.78.060(A) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that three (3) findings be made in order to approve a Conditional Use Permit. The required findings are listed below in bold italics, followed by an evaluation.

1. The proposed use or development is consistent with the City of Roseville General Plan and the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan.

The land use designation of the subject property is Open Space. Telecommunication facilities are allowed in every land use designation as a public service. The proposed facility will be designed and constructed in a manner consistent with adopted land use policies and appropriate design guidelines to the extent possible. The existing PG&E tower, proposed antennas, and telecommunication facility are consistent with the General Plan. The proposed use does not conflict with any policies identified in the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan Area. The General Plan relies on the Zoning Ordinance to determine the appropriate location and design of telecommunication facilities through the Conditional Use Permit process.

2. The proposed use or development conforms with all applicable standards and requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Telecommunications facilities are allowed in all zoning districts subject to conformance with general standards. The following are standards from Zoning Ordinance Section 19.34.030 (General Standards) and apply to all antennas and telecommunication facilities.

a. Building mounted antennas are encouraged, provided that the wireless communication facility is compatible with the building design and does not negatively impact the surrounding area.

No building mounted antennas are proposed, as there are no buildings in the vicinity that would provide the desired level of service coverage.

b. Where building mounting is not possible, an attempt should be made to screen new monopoles from public view and to co-locate new antennas on existing monopoles.

The applicant proposes to co-locate six antennas on an existing PG&E tower and locate the associated ground-equipment within the footprint of the tower. The proposed location is appropriate because it allows for co-location and joint use of the site which will result in an overall increase of the tower height by approximately six (6) feet.

c. In order to minimize overall visual impact, wireless communication facilities should be designed to promote facility and site sharing.

PG& E towers are ideal for telecommunications co-locations. They provide the necessary height for optimal antenna placement in areas that generally have maximum height restrictions. Additionally, these towers have a dedicated power source, and often have established access to the site.

d. No facility should be installed on an exposed ridgeline, in or at a location readily visible from a public trail or other recreation area, or scenic area unless it is satisfactorily screened or made to appear as a natural environmental feature.

The proposed antennas will be placed on an existing PG&E tower, which will minimize the visual impact from adjacent views. The tower is located in an existing power line easement corridor. The primary use of the property is public utilities transmission along the towers and passive open space on the ground. These use types are paired in multiple locations throughout the City. Although not a "natural" feature, the PG&E towers are a consistent feature throughout the Open Space areas that are located under power line easements. There are two other PG&E towers of similar height located within 180 feet of the subject tower and additional towers are visible along the sight lines of the easement corridor. The tower height will be increased by 6 feet, and given the existing height and the latticed nature of the top of the tower will likely not be noticeable from any adjacent parcel.

Currently, there is no screening provided for the existing PG&E ground equipment (see Figure 2, below). A wooden fence, six feet (6') in height will screen the equipment, and provide security for the site. Since ground equipment for the tower already exists at the site, and additional screening is planned for the site, staff does not anticipate any adverse impacts to the surrounding properties. To ensure the attractiveness and longevity of the fence, staff has included **Condition 4** which requires that the fence be constructed of cedar, have a top rail, and be water sealed.

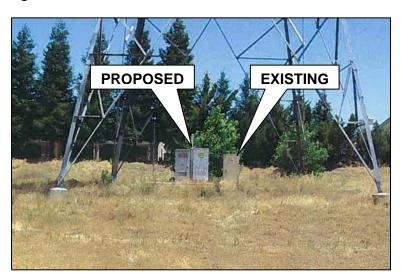


Figure 2: Photo Simulation

e. Wireless communication facilities should be painted color(s), which are most compatible with their surroundings.

Condition 3 has been included to require the antenna panels and all visible appurtenances be painted a uniform low-gloss medium gray color to blend with the surrounding PG&E towers.

f. Innovative design should be used whenever the screening potential for the site is low. For example, designing structures, which are compatible with surrounding architecture, or appear as a natural environmental feature, could help mitigate the visual impact of a facility.

The proposed extension of the PG&E tower will allow for maximum service capacity, while presenting the least visible impact to surrounding properties via the co-location. There are no surrounding architectural or environmental features that could be used, and the visual impact of the proposed antennas is low.

g. Wireless communication facilities and all other equipment, such as emergency generators and air conditioners, must be designed to be consistent with the City noise standards when in proximity to sensitive receptors.

The closest sensitive receptor (single-family home) is approximately 35 feet away from the tower. The proposed equipment will be located next to the existing ground-mounted PG&E equipment, which typically generates minimal noise levels through the use of electrical equipment, such as power supplies and cooling fans. The applicant indicates that the equipment will generate minimal noise output (comparable to a household refrigerator). It is anticipated that long-term noise impacts over and above the ambient noise levels (traffic, power lines, single-family dwellings, etc.) will be minimal and well within the limits established by the City's Municipal Code Section 9.24. To ensure this, staff has included **Condition 5** which requires the project to comply with the City's Noise Ordinance.

h. A professional telecommunications expert shall perform an evaluation of the radio frequency certifying that the frequency levels meet Federal standards and that the facility will not interfere with the City's or other public entities emergency broadcast systems.

Condition 8 requires the applicant to provide documentation that the telecommunications facility will not interfere with public safety amplification signals.

i. Telecommunication Facilities located on a lot adjacent to a residential zone district shall be set back from the residential zone by two (2) feet for each one (1) foot of total height. The required setback shall be measured at its widest potential position.

This standard is intended to be applied to the location of new towers. The PG&E tower is existing and predates the residential zones adjacent.

3. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the use or development is compatible with and shall not adversely affect or be materially detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of persons residing or working in the area, or be detrimental or injurious to public or private property or improvements.

Location: The proposed antennas will be located on an existing PG&E tower to minimize the need and impact of additional towers. The site will be accessed by an existing dirt access road within a PG&E access easement. The location will not be detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of persons residing or working in the area.

Size and Design: The applicant proposes to install six antennas on an existing tower and locate the associated unmanned equipment within a 200 square-foot lease area within in the tower's footprint (see Exhibit A). All ground equipment will be screened by a 6-foot cedar fence with a top rail.

Hazards to Public Safety: The Fire Department included **Condition 6**, requiring the applicant to comply with safety precautions for handling of hazardous materials. The applicant is aware of the conditions and will provide the required information to the Fire Department.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Staff has reviewed the plans and concluded that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed telecommunication facility will be compatible with the area. The proposed equipment area will be adequately screened; and although the antennas will be visible from adjacent views, the impact will not be significant due to the appearance and height of the existing PG&E tower. Based on the evaluations above, staff believes that the Planning Commission can make the required findings and approve the Conditional Use Permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

This application is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines pertaining to alterations to existing facilities, and pursuant to Section 305 of the Roseville CEQA Implementing Procedures.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Redevelopment Department recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the three findings of fact as stated in the staff report for the CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 5871 SILKWOOD WAY SERSP PCL 83 METRO PCS CELL TOWER EXTENSION FILE #2009PL-009 (PROJECT # CUP-000055); and
- B. Approve the CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 5871 SILKWOOD WAY SERSP PCL 83 METRO PCS CELL TOWER EXTENSION FILE #2009PL-009 (PROJECT # CUP-000055) with eight (8) conditions of approval.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP-000055)

- 1. The project is approved as shown in Exhibit A and as conditioned or modified below. (Planning)
- 2. This conditional use permit approval shall be effectuated within a period of two (2) years from this date and if not effectuated shall expire on **March 12, 2011**. Prior to said expiration date, the applicant may apply for an extension of time, provided, however, this approval shall be extended for no more than a total of one year from **March 12, 2011**.
- 3. The antenna panels and all visible appurtenances shall be painted a uniform low-gloss medium gray color to match the transmission tower. (Planning)
- 4. The equipment pad area shall be screened by a six (6) foot tall wooden fence, (cedar) with a top rail. The fence shall be water sealed to the satisfaction of the Planning & Redevelopment Department. (Planning & Redevelopment)
- 5. The project is subject to the noise standards established in the City's Noise Ordinance. In accordance with the City's Noise Ordinance project construction is exempt between the hours of seven a.m. and seven p.m. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of eight a.m. and eight p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Provided, however, that all construction equipment shall be fitted with factory installed muffling devices and that all construction equipment shall be maintained in good working order. (Building)
- 6. Use or storage of hazardous materials, liquids, gases and/or chemicals shall meet the requirements of the Chapter 6.95 of the Health and Safety Code, the Roseville Fire Department and the National Fire Codes. Submit a complete plan set and the Hazardous Materials Business Plan, including names and amount of any hazardous materials that will be stored or used, to the Bureau of Fire Prevention for review and approval. A permit application shall also be provided at the time of submittal. Contact Steve Anderson of our Hazardous Materials Division within the Fire Department at (916) 774-5821 to initiate the process. (Fire)
- 7. The design and installation of all fire protection equipment shall conform to the California Fire Code and the amendments adopted by the City of Roseville, along with all standards and policies implemented by the Roseville Fire Department. (Fire)
- 8. Prior to improvement/building plan approval, the applicant shall provide radio coverage documentation indicating that this cellular facility will not interfere with public safety amplification signals to the satisfaction of the City. (Fire)

ATTACHMENTS

1. Photo Simulations

EXHIBIT

A. Project Plans

Note to Applicant and/or Developer: Please contact the Planning & Redevelopment Department staff at (916) 774-5276 prior to the Commission meeting if you have any questions on any of the recommended conditions for your project. If you challenge the decision of the Commission in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues which you or someone else raised at the public hearing held for this project, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning & Redevelopment Director at, or prior to, the public hearing.